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INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE:

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SUBJECT The Arrest of Nikola P.

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INFO.

DIST. 20 August 1967

PAGES 12

SUPPLEMENT

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ORIGIN

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25X1 In view of the importance attached to the recent trial of Nikola Petkov,
Bulgarian Opposition Deputy, [REDACTED] the 80th
25X1 Session of the Bulgarian Grand National Assembly, held on 5 June 1947, is of
interest since it records the parliamentary debate concerning the request of
25X1 the Prosecutor of the Sofia District Court, to deprive Sofia Deputy Nikola
25X1 Petkov of his parliamentary immunity and authorization for his arrest and trial.

Vladimir Dimchev (Communist): The question is: What does article one of the Law for the Defense of the People's Government provide: It reads: "Whoever forms or leads within the country or abroad organizations or groups which are aimed at the overthrow, undermining, or weakening of the established government of the state, through coup d'etat, revolution, troubles, terrorist activity or crimes dangerous to society, is punishable by the heaviest penalty - death or life imprisonment." Therefore, the prosecutor is fully authorized to send this letter and to request our authorization. Is the accusation of the prosecutor unsupported? Does he send this letter without grounds?

Voice from the Opposition: By Order of the Party:

Dimchey: No, gentlemen deputies! The letter of the prosecutor is supported by a mass of accusing material. First, the process of the conspirative organization "Neutral Officer", in which three groups of twenty-seven men each were indicted. With the exception of four, all the rest were condemned in conformity with the act of indictment..... They made confessions in their written replies to the preliminary investigation and to the court, confessions of thirty -- forty -- fifty typewritten pages. Their confessions contain their explanations of how they joined this organization, their regrets and their pleas for leniency.

Voice from the Opposition: They wrote that which was dictated to them.

Dimchev: I must assure you, gentlemen deputies, that eleven members of the Commission expressed themselves on the evidence presented. We were all conscious that the task given us was important and essential. The Opposition representatives on the commission witnessed the seriousness.

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the calm, and objectiveness with which the evidence was examined. We do not condemn. Our task is to make pronouncement whether we find the prosecutor's request to be founded, whether there is sufficient evidence in support of his request. We examined the submitted data without any party prejudice.

Voice from the Opposition: There is nobody to believe you!

Dimchev: ... but, as I said, objectively and calmly. It is beyond doubt that we have two verdicts on the two conspirative organizations, "Neutral Officer" and "Military Alliance". These verdicts were issued by lawfully established courts, with complete freedom of defense, with full freedom for the presentation of evidence. Dimitar Tzvetkov should tell his comrades that when a verdict comes into legal force, then, according to our laws, it has been correctly issued according to the facts (retorts from the Opposition).

Voice from the Opposition: Were the Fascist verdicts correct?

Peter Anastassov (Socialist): You are Red Fascists!

Dimchev: In reading all this accusing material you can find in the testimonies of the accused absolutely no note of a forced confession (laughter from the Opposition), taken forcibly or otherwise (retorts from the Opposition). Only people with an extremely light and unscientific attitude toward certain judiciary material can jabber in the manner of the gentlemen of the Opposition. Each logical mind, in reading these testimonies, will intuitively know that they tell of things that are completely true (retorts from the Opposition). The accused confess their guilt and disclose their inspirers, those that have urged them on, that have psychologically prepared them to embrace the idea of conspiracy and activities for an armed coup d'etat against the authorities, those who have urged them along this criminal road. Many of the accused confess that they have been influenced by that which they have read in Narodno Zemedelsko Zname and Svobodni Narod and by that which has been spoken to them. Hesitant officers have been given conviction by the other officers; they have been led to meet Nikola Petkov, and after having been in his study they have come out calm, inspired, as some of them say, for the idea of conspiracy and coup d'etat.

(Here Dimchev reads extracts from the testimonies of Peter Jetchev and Stefan Avramov and others.)

Dimchev: If the prosecutor had sent a letter to request the trial of Nikola Petkov only on the strength of the military section that would have been amply sufficient. Because if the military section has been formed to attract officers with the clear intent to be able at a given moment to overthrow the government by force, then the criminal act in paragraph one of article one is completely covered. The testimonies of these two officers show that such a military section has in reality been formed, that Peter Koev is a member of this section, that in the name of that section Peter Koev maintains contact, encourages and assists the formation of the other two military conspirative fascist organizations.... It has often been said here that the Opposition maintains the struggle with the ballot only. You see that only one year after 9 September, after the defection of Petkov from the government, Petkov, Koev and others of the Opposition are at the bottom of these conspiracies. Therefore, they wish to overthrow the government by armed coup d'etat, by oppression, and not by the ballot.

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You can speak hypocritically of whatever you like. The biggest conspirators talk only of democratic means of reaching power pending the completion of their conspiracy. Peter Koev does not act on his own initiative. Peter Koev is the most intimate and closest friend of Nikola Petkov. Peter Koev informs Nikola Petkov about everything. In his contact with these officers Peter Koev speaks on behalf of the section, in the name of the political secretary at the head of this organization, which grows and prospers under his care. If Koev actually was proceeding only in his own name they would not decide to converse and contact him.

In the platform of the organization "Neutral Officer" there is the following point: "We should get in touch with the Opposition". Avramov is charged with the maintenance of this contact. As I said in the beginning, the reason for it is clear. The officers will effect the coup d'etat but they will then have to hand over the power to someone and when they seek someone they can rely on they find Nikola Petkov - they find the Opposition - they find the deputies around Nikola Petkov, as well as others who agree with these projects and supply them with inspiration.

Kotcho Bonev (Agrarian National Party): You wish to break up the Agrarian Union!

Dimchev: Kotcho Bonev! You are enough of a coward to keep away from these dangerous matters.

Bonev: One head to one life!

(Dimchev reads written testimony of General Ivan Constantinov Popov.)

Dimchev: Yes, gentlemen, you had prepared to take over the government, you had prepared the necessary personnel as well so as to eliminate those that hinder you. You have on many occasions addressed yourself to us here with the words: "Soon will your song be finished!" The more gullible of you have even mentioned a time limit of fifteen days.... Your conviction is certainly due to the fact that you believe that you can force the will of the Bulgarian people with the assistance of international reaction. You must remember, however, that we are not in 1923, that today the authority is in the hands of workers and peasants joined in a holy union, mindful of the lesson of the past, and that every attempt to inflict a blow on the people's authority will meet the steel muscles of this strong Fatherland Front organization which unites all Fatherland Front democratic forces. Any among you will perceive that nobody's coup d'etat will succeed! (Retorts from the Opposition.) (He continues to read the testimony): "Two days after I met him I went to his home on Tsar Shishman Street. He received me in his study. Our conversation lasted forty-five minutes.... He described the internal situation of the country as highly tense because of the unlawful acts of the authorities, the lack of measures to limit the high cost of living, etc."

Why do these officers always seek out Nikola Petkov for his analysis of the internal and international situation? All that have gone to him state that they requested his opinion on the internal and international situation. Because, through his tendentious interpretation of the external situation, by speaking of the widely publicized atomic bombs which were stated to be very fearful, of the very great power of America, of the weakening power of the Fatherland Front, of its negation by the people, of the sufficient exhaustion of the

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Soviet Union which is no longer capable of opposing the greater democratic powers, he has wished to emphasize that the overthrow of the Fatherland Front and their taking over of power is impending. When the first man of the Opposition, Nikola Petkov, leader of the Opposition, speaks so authoritatively to officers, who can be magnificent as officers but who understand little of politics, who have no orientation in political life and international events; and when Nikola Petkov makes this statement in the manner which he deems proper, then, I beg you to agree, his words will have a reflection in their minds, they will listen, they will follow his lips, and they will follow his instructions.

(He reads): "... I gave him detailed information on the organization 'Neutral Officer', namely, organization plan, aims, problems, means. I gave him no names at this meeting, but only said that we will appoint a general staff officer as liaison to his staff-military section. He approved of the existence of our organization and asked me what he had in the provinces. I replied that I will tell him more and acquainted him with the desire of the Central Committee of our organization to be shown reliable people of his in the provinces for the establishment of contact and common effort. That he promised to do in the next meeting after reflection and consultation with a person of his staff the name of which person he kept secret." We have brought out the activity of the military section. It is to win influence among the officers and to make use of them in an eventual taking over of the government by force. Speak out, are these facts? You have a stenciled reply: this has been drawn out by oppression, this does not correspond to the facts. Even if fifty persons were to speak in this direction we would be obliged to listen to the Opposition....

(Reading from the testimony of Colonel Marko Ivanov): "We went to Nikola Petkov's home dressed as civilians; he received us immediately and I presented Colonel Gergov to him as a representative of our group of officers who works in the army so that we can collaborate with him. Then I said that we would like to hear his opinion of the situation. He made a review of the situation and stressed the fact that the Fatherland Front government is dictatorial. I told him that the mass of officers on active service would be on his side. He said that he is well aware of the humor and attitude of the officers toward him and his party because he has been visited by quite a number of officers who have offered him their collaboration. We proposed to him as army chief of staff General Popov, retired. He said that he had been told of Popov, and that he would have our recommendation in view. We suggested the above changes as first steps to throwing the Communists out of the army. On the question of assistant-commanders, we told him that it would be best to have them go. He had a very negative attitude toward them, saying that they are completely superfluous and that they are merely transmitters of Communism. He alluded that the Communists may not cede authority. Then I told him that we are resolving the problem at its worst, by which I wished to tell him that we are also preparing a coup d'etat. He understood my meaning because he made a certain reserve, that he intends first to carry out the struggle by legal ways, and that could only be by extreme means. Later, by the fact that he agreed to publish our articles in his newspaper, it was clear that he agreed and accepted our collaboration."

.... There is no need of further proof The question is very clear. The prosecutor, examining the witnesses' testimonies, the confessions of the accused, the press materials, certain letters addressed to foreign powers ('Mahzari') finds that there is sufficient ground for Petkov to be tried, on the prosecutor's conscience and conviction.

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Gentlemen! We are alarmed if a crime like murder is committed. How can we remain silent if Nikola Petkov, led by his painful ambition to be at the head of the government and to command does not hesitate at the prospect of starting a civil war which would cause hundreds of thousands of deaths?

Voice from the Opposition: You are at present distributing arms in the villages. What use do you want to make of it?

Dimchev: Therefore the Commission finds that the request of the prosecutor must be acceded to and that the Assembly should decide to deprive Nikola Petkov of his immunity and authorize him to be arrested, examined, tried, and punished according to the law (applause by the Majority.)

President Kolarov: The word is given to Deputy Titko Chernokolev.

Titko Chernokolev (Communist): Gentlemen Deputies! The accusation against Nikola Petkov is very serious. It is nothing surprising, nothing new. It is the logical ending of an anti-national career of Nikola Petkov from the moment he broke away from the Fatherland Front and slid down the slope of reaction (applause by the Majority).

Ivan Ginchev (Agrarian National Party): Why did he break away?

Chernokolev: I shall tell you why presently.

Ginchev: Because he did not wish to march to your tune but to the tune of the Bulgarian people.

President Kolarov: (Rings)....

Chernokolev: Listen well - At the time when Nikola Petkov left the Fatherland Front, despite the great efforts made by our party and by all Fatherland Front parties to save him, he explained his separation by the words that he does not agree with the interference which the Communist Party was alleged to be doing in matters of the Agrarian Union, with the arbitrariness of the militia, etc....declaring, that he agrees with and remains true to the program of the Fatherland Front. He strove to convince public opinion in our country, to convince his own comrades, and public opinion abroad, that he has no program divergencies with the Fatherland Front. What happened? Society imagined that Nikola Petkov would then begin a loyal, creative, and constructive criticism to correct insufficiencies and the errors of the Fatherland Front government. However, Nikola Petkov, under the veil of a fight against the insufficiencies and licenses here and there in the country....

Voice from the Opposition: Everywhere, not here and there

Chernokolev: ... he adapted in general his conduct to a hostile line of conduct toward the Fatherland Front. Let us examine whether there is one undertaking in our country from 9 September on, carried out by the Fatherland Front, with which Petkov has agreed. Can it be that all the Fatherland Front has achieved in internal and foreign policy is bad? Nikola Petkov declared against the agrarian reform. Nikola Petkov declared against the labor cooperative farms, against the abrogation of the monarchy, against the constitution.

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The Opposition: Heyyyyyyyyyy!

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Chernokolev: He declared against the granting of assistance to the families of fighters who perished. He started a campaign for the liberation of Fascists from prisons and concentration camps, against the law for the defense of the People's Government, against the economic policy of the government of the Fatherland Front, for the decrease of the price of industrial goods. He declared against the entire internal policy of the Fatherland Front. On foreign policy, Petkov began with letters to foreign powers, and with appeals to foreigners to interfere in our internal affairs. At the time of the peace conference, Nikola Petkov assisted the enemies of the Bulgarian people, so as to have a heavy peace treaty come to our people - then he committed the greatest of treasons against people and fatherland (applause from the Majority).

.... He wants to spoil our good relations with our liberators. He carries on intrigues at the time of the money exchange; he wants to spoil our good relations with France. He intrigues daily with the Great Powers. He places his stake on war. He does not place his stake on the collaboration between Great Powers but on the conflict of the Great Powers. Nikola Petkov awaits this conflict in order to come to power. when he lost hope that he would come to power by the road of the people's confidence, by legal means, then he took to the old and tried coup d'etat methods; he took the same road of the reaction after the last war; that reaction had lost the confidence of the people and attempted to overthrow the government of the people by means of coups d'etat, conspiracy, by winning over the reactionary forces in the army. Nikola Petkov attempts at present to bring about a restoration through armed struggle.

The facts brought out by the prosecutor, the data contained in the trials, the well-known facts of the inimical anti-national policy of Nikola Petkov, his connections with the foreign reaction, show utterly clearly that Nikola Petkov is the main organizer and center of the reactionary forces in our country (applause by the Majority).

Voice from the Opposition: The peasants have no bread and you speak of their having arms!

Chernokolev: We shall be the greatest criminals in the eyes of our people if we are silent and inactive. At a moment when Nikola Petkov and a group of reactionaries around him undermine national unity, destroy the powers of resistance of our people, disorganize the forces of the people for the rehabilitation of the country, in a moment when civil war is carried on on our southern border, we can not allow ourselves the luxury to tolerate any further this criminal and shameful activity by Nikola Petkov (applause and cries of "true" by the Majority). Nikola Petkov must be sent for trial by the court of the people, to answer for his criminal anti-national activity.

With the conscience of a highly patriotic duty being fulfilled, and following the interests of the people and the country, the parliamentary group of the Communist Party will vote to have Nikola Petkov deprived of his parliamentary immunity and to have him tried by the country's tribunals.

We are convinced that many of you will recognize this fateful moment and will not connect your activity, your name, and your existence - remember, as a loyal opposition within the limits of the laws - with the criminal conspiratorial activity of Nikola Petkov. If you align yourselves with these criminal conspiracies, you become an anti-national (reports from the Opposition), for which you should make your accounts very carefully. Remember, for

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you the moment is decisive. You have on hand a possibility to break away....

The Opposition: AHaaaaa....

Chernokolev: ... from the traitorous anti-national activity of Nikola Petkov, and, if you are honest people, to begin work together with all the remaining parties of the Fatherland Front (retorts from the Opposition). You can be certain that we shall not allow you further license. We shall not allow fools to play rough-house (applause by the Majority). The Grand National Assembly will "bind the priest so as to have peace in the village" (applause by the Majority)....

Christo Yurukov (Radical Party and Mihail Genovski (F.F. Agrarians): Both confirm the approval of their respective parliamentary groups and declare that they will vote for the proposal.)

President Kolarov: (Gives the floor to Deputy Assen Stamboliiski.)

Assen Stamboliiski (Agrarian National Party): (met with applause from the Opposition) I come not to defend Nikola Petkov but to state that the Bulgarian people knows that he is innocent ... and if anybody should judge Nikola Petkov it should be the Bulgarian people and not you (applause and 'Bravo' from the Opposition).

Nikola Ailukov (Communist): The Bulgarian people has long ago condemned him as a traitor.

Tzola Dragoitcheva (Communist): Where are the Bulgarian people?

Stamboliiski: I know where the Bulgarian people are, Madame Dragoitcheva.

Voice from the Majority: Where are you?

Stamboliiski: I know where I am. I am where my place is. (applause from the Opposition.)

Voice from the Majority: With the traitors, with reaction.

Stamboliiski: I shall not be with you, while you continue in this direction.

Minister Anton Yugov: You have a guilty conscience (applause from the Majority). You are he who armed the group in Pazardzhik county. You are a pub-keeper, you are no fighter at all, and you stain the name of your father....

Stamboliiski: It is clear, from the report of the argument which (Dinchev) tries to construct, that everything is built upon sand (applause from the Opposition). The words of Chernokolev... made clear that the aim is purely political.... I respect my father and I stand there where he stood.

Luben Gumerov (Communist): You are with the murderers of your father.

Stamboliiski: The murderers are here (points to the Ministers' desk) (Applause from the Opposition).... The aim is purely political - to safeguard the Bulgarian people from new perturbations. You know perfectly well that the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union has only one means of struggle - the ballot (applause from the Opposition).

Minister Yugov: Tell us why you armed the bands in Pazardzhik?

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Stamboliiski: Mr. Yugov: I was caught with a pistol in my pocket and you carry pistols (applause from the Opposition).... When you were being persecuted, Madame Tzola Dragoicheva, there were three or four conspiracies in the files of the State Security police and in a given moment when the government was feeling weak they brought these conspiracies out in order to consolidate their position.

Dimitar Kotev (Communist): And who killed your father? Were there no organizers of coups d'etat then? There they are now! (shows the Opposition).

Stamboliiski: The organizers of coups d'etat and the murderers of my father are here, at your desks (shows the desk of the Ministers). And only there! (long applause and cries of "Bravo" from the Opposition and retorts from the Majority).

President Kolarov: Please let the speaker continue.

Stamboliiski: It is clear that the aim is political.

Yugov: Only you have no notion of politics.

Stamboliiski: It was whispered to us in the corridor, before we entered the session: "Now we shall understand which of you are wise." You wish to find traitors among us? You will not find them! (applause and cries "true" from the Opposition). You can be certain that you will not find them!

Dimitar Georgiev: That means that we shall not find wise and honest persons among you!

Stamboliiski: They all are honest. You will not find traitors there.... More calm, gentlemen! Let the Minister of Interior take care to find accusations for me. I declare that I am the first 'udarnik' (shock worker) to go to prison after Nikola Petkov (applause from the Opposition).

Yugov: The Minister of Interior must warn you that the People's authority is well organized and will place every criminal like you and many others in their places. That is what I can tell you (stormy applause from the Majority).

Stamboliiski: ... The Agrarian Parliamentary Group declares through me that it... is ready to serve the Bulgarian people as it has served the people up to the present.

Yugov: Whosoever becomes aligned with Nikola Petkov, he will have a similar fate.

Stamboliiski: Beware of burning bridges, because you have burned sufficient collaboration bridges already... We declare that we stand behind our secretary Nikola Petkov.... The God of the agrarians is alive. You may be certain, whatever efforts you may exert to set the leaders of the agrarian movement aside from your road you will not succeed... The Agrarian Union did not stop to exist with the death of Alexander Stamboliiski.... nor with the death of Petko Petkov, nor when its other leaders were persecuted and arrested. He will not stop to exist now after you put Nikola Petkov in prison. The Agrarian Union will remain united and undaunted in the defense of Bulgarian democracy... and the dawn of democracy will soon come (applause from the Opposition).

President Kolarov: (Gives the floor to ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Ivan Pashov).

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Dr. Ivan Pashov (Communist): ... It is not a pure hazard that in our country as well as abroad reaction lifts up its head and starts organizing. Is it a hazard that at present in Hungary the Prime Minister is to be tried for treason...? The competency of the National Assembly is to state whether there are grounds to deprive him of his immunity. The Bulgarian courts are competent to state whether he is guilty or innocent. ... The Fatherland Front has yet to play a very long, important and responsible role for our country. The Fatherland Front will resolve all its responsible historic problems... and each one who tries to impede this progress... will be crushed (applause from the Majority). You wish to commit treason toward the people and the Fatherland. But the people will not allow you to play with it. From 9 September on, the people have taken its destinies in its own hands. The people will no longer entrust any government to you....

Todor Tiholov: (Spokesman for the Socialist Government Parliamentary Group): (Expresses approval of the proposal to deprive Petkov of his immunity).

Yani Yaney ('Agrarian, Government') (Approves proposal to deprive Petkov of his immunity).

President Kolarov: Mr. Lulchev has the floor.

Kosta Lulchev (Socialist): I came in the name of the parliamentary group of the Workers' Social Democrat Party, United. (interruption).. to reply to the request of the prosecutor with a "No" (interruption).. In a moment of important international events (interruption) when Bulgaria awaits the ratification of its treaty (interruption) in order to start on the road of calm and normal political development (interruption), when the Assembly is to deliberate on the most important and fateful of issues (interruption) - the elaboration of the constitution (interruption) the work of the Assembly must be stopped, in order that the Assembly should attend to the request of the prosecutor (interruption)...the environment at which this question was placed in the Assembly speaks sufficiently clearly of the tendency and aim in which it was placed (retorts from the Majority). The Assembly was honored for this occasion by the presence of all ministers... and by the presence of numerous groups of foreign guests in the corridors of the Assembly (applause from the Opposition). An important and fateful question! Nikola Petkov is not a casual anybody (interruption) he represents 1,500,00 votes.... And let it be known: the decision of the Bulgarian people and of its representatives to fight for freedom and democracy shall not be crushed (applause from the Opposition; retorts from the Majority).

Yugov: All those who encourage organizers of coups d'etat and who participate in conspiracies will have a similar fate (applause from the Majority). Whosoever defends Nikola Petkovists, he is an organizer of coups d'etat, he outlaws himself. This should be well understood by you..! (Series of interruptions - the speech of Lulchev drifts to side topics in brief exchanges with Communist deputies.)

Yordan Panayotov (Zveno) and Peko Takov (Communist): (Approve of the request by the prosecutor.)

President Kolarov: (Gives the word to Nikola Petkov).

Nikola Petkov: (Agrarian National Party): (met with applause and standing up by the Opposition): Gentlemen and Ladies! It appears that only I shall be calm here and shall make no show of nerves, following the advice of deputy Titko Chernokozhev. I shall not justify my-

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self, because the innocent do not need to justify themselves. (applause by the Opposition). My task has been very much facilitated by deputies Titko Chernokolev, Dr. Ivan Pashov, the Minister of the Interior and by the Prime Minister himself. All four of them stressed very clearly: the personality of Nikola Petkov is not aimed at and that personality has no significance. The aim is different - to strike down the secretary of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union... (applause by the Opposition).

Georgi Kostov (Communist): Organizer of coup d'etat.

Petkov: ... to strike down the organization of the Bulgarian peasants (applause by the Opposition) because today it stands on an unshakeable position. This position is: independence of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (applause by the Opposition) independence of the organizational life of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union, struggle for the freedoms and rights of the Bulgarian people (applause by the Opposition). That is where the blow is intended (retorts by the Majority). I beg of you! You all had your turn to speak, have the fairness to allow a man to say a few words.' I beg of you. It is not much that I want. I do not justify myself. Have a little patience! You spoke most insolently, most nervously, even though you had said that you would be objective.

Chernokolev: You are trembling!

Petkov: I never tremble. My hands may be trembling from other things, as those of other tremble from other things.

Chernokolev: When a man has sold his conscience, he trembles.

Petkov: My conscience has always been clear. It has always been clear, because all in my family have had clear consciences. There are no persons of impure conscience in my family and there will not be such. All of you have thought for a long time and have constantly said, even to some of our agrarians, that Nikola Petkov will escape. You see for yourself that Nikola Petkov is here, that he has not escaped.

The Majority: He cannot escape

Petkov: Do not talk like this. You know very well whether one can escape or not. Gentlemen, Titko Chernokolev has very well said it! The blow here must be given against the position of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (retorts from the Majority). Dr. Ivan Pashov said "The same thing that happened in Hungary must happen here." The reply is in the question itself.

Kotev: There are traitors, both here and there.

Petkov: However, I am obliged to say that even today the Agrarian Union, of which I have the honor to be secretary, stands on the same platform. This platform is the same as it was on 9 September.

Dragoicheva: Do not profane the 9th of September!

Petkov: These positions are: collaboration with the Communist Party at equal rights and equal obligations (applause by the Opposition), and the right to free organizational life for the Agrarian Union.

Dragoicheva: You would not find a single coup d'etat organizer in the Communist Party.

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Petkov: It is not the Agrarian Union which altered its positions, but you... you want to interfere in the internal life of the Agrarian Union (applause by the Opposition). And that is true, because even today the government is in a crisis, because you wish to interfere in the affairs of that section of the Agrarian Union which is with you (applause by the Opposition). And today you declare, or better, you will declare Obbov and Georgi Dragnev as traitors, and you will cast them out, because in the last moment they too understood that the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union cannot be liquidated by anyone (applause by the Opposition).

Chernokolev: This intrigue will not succeed.

Petkov: But I declare here that you will not succeed. You will not succeed in making the breakthrough that you desire. At 3 o'clock today, in these corridors, Georgi Chankov and Titko Chernokolev summoned Assen Stamboliiski and told him: "You have still an hour's time to think, and to obey in order to save yourself (applause by the Opposition and cries of "Shame"). This is the truth.

Chernokolev: This is a lie! We shall not collaborate with traitors like you.

Petkov: There - Assen Stamboliiski is here.

Chernokolev: This is a lie! (Retorts from the Opposition).

Petkov: I beg of you, you have made proposals even to me personally, that if I agree to obey I can again come to the Fatherland Front with you.

Chernokolev: Who has made you that proposal?

Petkov: I do not wish to say. There are persons on this desk here (points to the Ministers' desk). I do not wish to say. And if I have not accepted, it is because today I still believe in the platform on which all these comrades stand (showing the Opposition): equal rights, and equal obligations. Give freedom to the Bulgarian people and we shall all come to you.

Yugov: Freedom to the people, not to conspirators!

Petkov: Mr. Minister! A little quiet, please. I listened to you for so long, you have had an entire day at your disposal. You have the press at your disposal, you have all. Now you will be able to pour all the accusations that you wish on an imprisoned man.

Yugov: The magistrates will do their best.

Petkov: As you see, I do not even justify myself. Give me a minute's time. Have a little good manners.

Yugov: All right; all right. We shall learn.

Petkov: You do need to learn. The Bulgarian Agrarian National Union will hold to the same platform. And you deceive yourself, if you believe the contrary. You will not find a turn-coat among these comrades (shows the Opposition) whom you wish to corrupt by various ways (applause by the Opposition and cries of "Bravo") because none of them will choose to become, not a defender of Nikola Petkov -- I told you that the personality has no significance -- but the liquidator of the organization of the Bulgarian peasants and of the greatest Bulgarian: Alexander Stamboliiski!! (all Opposition deputies stand up and applaud for a prolonged period).

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Chernokolev: It is significant that Lulchev also has risen!

Petkov: Gentlemen deputies, I conclude, I go to the prison with joy (applause from the Opposition).

The Majority: Ahaaaaaaa.....!

Petkov: I was cast out in 1938 from this same National Assembly for the same reasons - struggle for the rights and freedoms of the Bulgarian people, struggle against personal regime, together with ten of your comrades (applause and cries "Bravo" from the Opposition). Now as then - I declare that I consider myself happy to have the honor and happiness to follow the destiny of my father and my brother - to give my freedom, and if necessary - my life, for the freedom of the Bulgarian people. (Long applause from the Opposition and cries of "hurrah"). Long live the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (applause from the Opposition and cries "long live"). Long live liberty! (All Opposition deputies stand up, give long applause and cries of "hurrah").

President Kolarov: (Rings) We shall come to the vote on the proposal of the Commission of the Ministry of Justice (some of the Opposition deputies begin to leave).

Chernokolev: Wait!

The Opposition: Down with dictatorship! Long life freedom! (Deputies of the Opposition go out).

President Kolarov: ...(reads)... "In accordance Articles 99 and 100 of the Regulation of Internal Order, the Grand National Assembly accedes to the request of the prosecutor of the Sofia District Court, deprives Sofia deputy Nikola Petkov of his parliamentary immunity and authorizes his arrest and trial according to the prosecutor's letter."

I beg the deputies who agree with this proposal to raise their hand. Majority. The Assembly adopts the proposal. (The Majority deputies stand up and applaud for a long time.)

The Opposition: Shame! Hoooooooooooo! (the Opposition deputies head for the exit and sing: "Whosoever falls in the struggle for freedom, he does not perish, he is mourned by earth and sky, beasts and nature, minstrels sing of him....").

President Kolarov: The session is over.

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